

Isolation and characterization of a mammalian gene encoding a high-affinity cAMP phosphodiesterase

(neurobiology/oncogenes/yeast expression vectors/polymerase chain reaction)

JOHN COLICELLI, CARMEN BIRCHMEIER, TAMAR MICHAELI, KATHY O'NEILL, MICHAEL RIGGS,
AND MICHAEL WIGLER*

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, P.O. Box 100, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724

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ABSTRACT A rat brain cDNA library has been constructed in a *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* expression vector and used to isolate genes that can function in yeast to suppress the phenotypic effects of *RAS2*^{val19}, a mutant form of the *RAS2* gene analogous to an oncogenic mutant of the human *HRAS* gene. One cDNA, DPD, was cloned and its genetic and biochemical properties were characterized. A DPD product would share 80% amino acid sequence identity with the *Drosophila melanogaster dunce*-encoded protein over an extended region. We have shown that the DPD protein is a high-affinity cAMP-specific phosphodiesterase.

The yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* encodes two genes, *RAS1* and *RAS2*, that have structural and functional homology with mammalian *RAS* oncogenes (1–4). When an activated form of the *RAS2* gene (*RAS2*^{val19}) is present, yeast cells fail to synthesize glycogen, are unable to arrest in G₁, are intolerant of nutrient starvation, and are acutely sensitive to heat shock (5, 6). These phenotypes, collectively referred to as loss of growth control, are primarily the result of overexpression or uncontrolled activation of the cAMP effector pathway via adenyl cyclase (2, 5, 7, 8).

We have previously reported the isolation of two yeast genes, *PDE1* and *PDE2*, the low- and high-affinity cAMP phosphodiesterase-encoding genes, respectively, by their ability to suppress the heat shock sensitivity in yeast cells harboring an activated *RAS2*^{val19} gene (6, 9). We now report the use of a rat brain cDNA library to clone a mammalian cDNA that is able to complement the loss of growth control associated with this activated *RAS2* gene in yeast.[†] The gene, *DPD* (dunce-like phosphodiesterase), encodes a high-affinity cAMP phosphodiesterase that is highly homologous to the cAMP phosphodiesterase encoded by the *dunce* locus of *Drosophila melanogaster*. *D. melanogaster* with mutations in *dunce* have learning and memory defects (10, 11).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Strains, Media, Transformations, and Heat Shock. *Escherichia coli* strain HB101 was used for plasmid propagation and isolation, and strain SCS1 (Stratagene) was used for transformation and maintenance of the cDNA library (12, 13). *S. cerevisiae* strains TK161-R2V (*MATa leu2 his3 ura3 trp1 ade8 can1 RAS2*^{val19}) (5) and 10DAB (*MATa leu2 his3 ura3 ade8 pde1::ADE8 pde2::URA3 ras1::HIS3*) were used. 10DAB was created from a segregant of a diploid strain produced by mating TS-1 (14) and DJ23-3C (15). The segregant (*MATa leu2 his3 ura3 ade8 pde1::LEU2 pde2::URA3 ras1::HIS3*) was subsequently transformed with the 5.4-kilobase-pair (kbp) *Xba* I *pde1::ADE8* fragment of pYT19-

DAB to yield strain 10DAB. Yeast cells were grown in either rich medium (YPD, yeast extract/peptone/dextrose) or synthetic medium with appropriate auxotrophic supplements (SC) (16). Transformation of yeast cells was performed with lithium acetate (17). Heat shock experiments were performed by replica plating onto preheated SC plates that were maintained at 55°C for 10 min, allowed to cool, and incubated at 30°C for 24–48 hr. Segregation analysis was performed by growing yeast transformants in YPD for 2–3 days, plating onto YPD plates, and replica plating onto YPD, SC-leucine (plasmid selection), and YPD heat shock plates.

Plasmids, DNA Manipulations, and Sequencing. Plasmid DNA from individual *E. coli* colonies was purified by standard procedures (18, 19). Extrachromosomal DNA was isolated from yeast as described (9). The plasmid pYT19DAB was constructed from pYT19 (9) by first deleting *PDE1* sequences between the *Sma* I and *Bal* I restriction sites to yield pYT19D. The 4-kbp *Bam*HI fragment of the *ADE8* gene was then inserted into the *Bam*HI site of pYT19D to yield pYT19DAB. The cloning vector pADNS is based on the plasmid pAD1 previously described (20). pADNS consists of a 2.2-kbp *Bgl* II/*Hpa* I fragment containing the *S. cerevisiae LEU2* gene from YE213 (21), a 1.6-kbp *Hpa* I/*Hind*III fragment of the *S. cerevisiae* 2- μ m plasmid containing the origin of replication, and a 2.1-kbp *Ssp* I/*Eco*RI fragment containing the ampicillin-resistance gene from the plasmid pUC18. It also contains a 1.5-kbp *Bam*HI/*Hind*III fragment of the modified *S. cerevisiae* alcohol dehydrogenase (*ADH1*) promoter (22, 23) and a 0.6-kbp *Hind*III/*Bam*HI fragment containing the *ADH1* terminator sequences. The promoter and terminator sequences are separated by a polylinker that contains the restriction endonuclease sites *Not* I, *Sac* II, and *Sfi* I between the existing *Hind*III and *Sac* I sites. The oligonucleotides used to create these sites were 5'-GG-CCAAAAGGCCGCGCCGCA and 5'-TCGACCGGTTT-TTCCGGCGCCGCGTTCGA. The plasmid pADPD is a pADNS-derived plasmid containing the 2.17-kb *DPD* cDNA insert.

Sequencing was performed by the dideoxynucleotide chain-termination method (24, 25). GENALIGN was used to align the *DPD* and *dunce* sequences (GENALIGN is a copyrighted software product of IntelliGenetics; developed by Hugo Martinez). RNA was purified from Sprague-Dawley rat brains by published procedures (26–28). cDNAs were ligated to the *Not* I linker oligonucleotides 5'-AAGCG-GCCGC and 5'-GCGGCCGCTT. The cDNAs were cleaved with *Not* I and cloned into the *Not* I site of pADNS by standard procedures.

Polymerase chain reactions (PCRs) were carried out in a thermocycler (Perkin-Elmer/Cetus) using a modification of

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Abbreviation: PCR, polymerase chain reaction.

*To whom reprint requests should be addressed.

[†]The sequence reported in this paper is being deposited in the EMBL/GenBank data base (accession no. J04563).

published procedures (29). Reaction mixtures contained template DNA (1 ng of cloned DNA or 1 μ g of total first strand cDNA), 25 pmol of oligonucleotide primers, 200 μ M deoxyribonucleotide triphosphates, 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.4), 50 mM KCl, 3 mM MgCl₂, and 0.01% (wt/vol) gelatin. The oligonucleotide primers used, as designated in Fig. 3, were as follows: A, 5'-CACCTGCTGACAAACCT⁴⁴; B, 5'-ATGGAGACGCTGGAGGAA¹⁵³; C, 5'-ATACGCCACATCAGATG⁶⁷⁶; D, 5'-TACCAGAGTATGATTCCC¹⁴⁴⁹; E, 5'-GTGTCGATCAGAGACTTG¹⁶⁶⁸; F, 5'-GCACACAGGTGGCAGAC²⁰⁴⁸. The numbers indicate position coordinates in Fig. 2. Primers C, E, and F are noncoding strand sequences. Thirty cycles (1.5 min at 94°C, 3 min at 55°C, and 7 min at 72°C) were performed and the reaction products were analyzed by polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

Phosphodiesterase Assays. Yeast cells were grown at 30°C for 36 hr in 1-liter cultures of synthetic medium (SC-leucine). Cells were harvested and washed with buffer C (20 mM Mes/0.1 mM MgCl₂/0.1 mM EGTA/1 mM 2-mercaptoethanol), were resuspended in 30 ml of buffer C with 50 μ l of 1 M phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride, and were disrupted with a French press. The extracts were centrifuged at 1600 \times g for 10 min and the supernatants were spun at 18,000 \times g for 90 min (4°C). The supernatant was assayed for phosphodiesterase activity (6, 9). All the reaction mixtures contained Tris-HCl (pH 7.5) (100 mM), cell extract (50 μ g of protein per ml), 5'-nucleotidase (20 ng/ml; Sigma), and Mg²⁺ (10 mM) (unless otherwise stated) and the indicated cyclic nucleotide concentrations. Assays for cGMP hydrolysis used 1.5 μ M cGMP. Inhibition studies used 5 μ M cAMP in the presence of various amounts of cGMP up to 500 μ M. [³H]cAMP and [³H]cGMP were from NEN. Reaction mixtures were incubated for 10 min at 30°C and stopped with 5 \times stop solution (250 mM EDTA/25 mM AMP/100 mM cAMP).

RESULTS

A Mammalian Gene That Can Revert the Heat Shock Sensitivity of RAS2^{val19} Yeast. We have previously described the isolation of several yeast genes that when overexpressed on extrachromosomal yeast vectors are capable of suppressing the heat shock sensitivity exhibited by the RAS2^{val19}-expressing strain TK161-R2V (6, 9). We have now used the same selection to isolate mammalian genes that can function in yeast to render RAS2^{val19} cells resistant to heat shock. A rat brain cDNA library was produced and cloned into the yeast expression vector pADNS (Fig. 1). cDNAs were ligated to *Not* I linkers, cleaved with *Not* I restriction enzyme, and cloned into pADNS at the *Not* I site situated between the alcohol dehydrogenase promoter and termination sequences. The use of the rare cutting *Not* I obviated the need for restriction site methylases commonly used in cDNA cloning.

Approximately 1.5 \times 10⁵ independent cDNA inserts were contained in the library, with an average insert size of 1.5 kbp. DNA prepared from the cDNA expression library was used to transform the RAS2^{val19} yeast strain TK161-R2V. The 50,000 Leu⁺ transformants obtained were subsequently tested for heat shock sensitivity. Only one transformant displayed heat shock resistance which was conditional upon retention of the expression plasmid. A plasmid, pADPD, was isolated from this transformant and the 2.17-kb *Not* I insert was analyzed by restriction site mapping (Fig. 1) and nucleotide sequencing (24, 25) (Fig. 2).

A large open reading frame of 562 codons was found. The first ATG, however, appears at codon 46 and a protein that initiates at this codon would have a predicted molecular mass of \approx 60 kDa. A second shorter open reading frame, separated from the first by three stop codons but in the same frame as the principal coding region, contains 116 codons. The nucleotide sequence of the coding strand ends with a stretch of

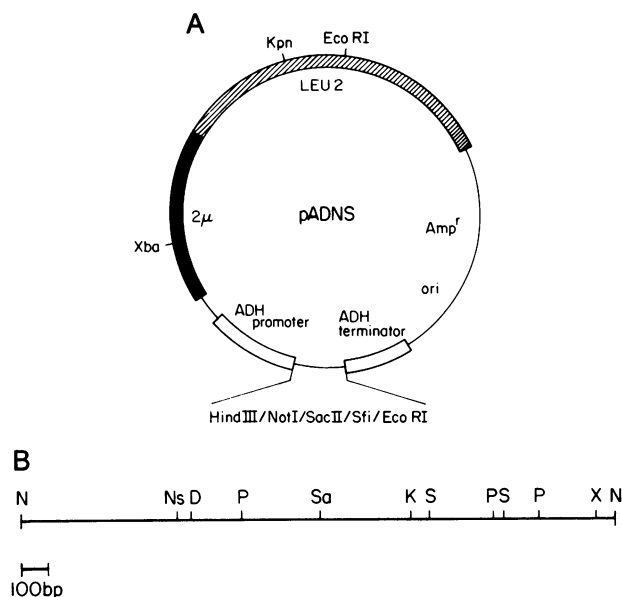


FIG. 1. Restriction maps of expression vector and isolated insert. (A) The expression vector pADNS is described in detail in *Materials and Methods*. It contains selectable markers for use in yeast (*LEU2*), and bacteria (*AMP^R*), as well as yeast and bacterial origins of replication. The yeast alcohol dehydrogenase sequences are shown with the *Not* I cloning site located between them. (B) The DPD cDNA insert is shown as a 2.17-kbp *Not* I fragment. N, *Not* I; Ns, *Nsi* I; D, *Dra* I; P, *Pvu* II; Sa, *Sac* I; K, *Kpn* I; S, *Stu* I; X, *Xba* I. The cDNA is presented with the coding strand oriented 5' (left) to 3' (right).

poly(A). A search for similar sequences was performed and the *D. melanogaster dunce* gene was found. The two genes would encode proteins with an 80% amino acid identity, without the introduction of gaps, over a 252-amino acid region located in the center of the rat DPD cDNA. The *dunce* gene has been shown to encode a high-affinity cAMP phosphodiesterase (30–32).

To demonstrate that the sequences upstream and downstream of the large sequence identity region were in fact contiguous with that region in the mRNA rather than artifacts of our method for cDNA cloning, we compared the structure of our cloned cDNA with DPD cDNAs contained in an independently prepared first strand cDNA population obtained by reverse transcribing total rat brain poly(A)⁺ RNA with an oligo(dT) primer. Oligonucleotide primers complementary to sequences located within the identity region, and to sequences near the 5' or 3' ends of the coding strand, were made. Using either the cloned DNA or the total first-strand cDNA material as template, PCRs were carried out using four different primer sets and the reaction products were analyzed by polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (Fig. 3). In each case, a fragment of the predicted length was obtained by using either of the template DNAs. The band assignments were confirmed by cleavage with restriction endonucleases having recognition sites within the amplified DNA product. Again, in each case, the primary PCR product obtained using either source of template yielded cleavage products of the predicted sizes. Some submolar background bands do appear in the PCR products but these were unaffected by the restriction digests. The results indicate that the sequence arrangement in the cloned cDNA faithfully reflects the structure of the rat mRNA.

Expression and Characterization of the DPD Gene Product. *S. cerevisiae* encodes two cAMP phosphodiesterase genes, *PDE1* and *PDE2* (6, 9). The strain 10DAB carries disruptions of both of these genes. The resulting cAMP phosphodiesterase deficiency leads to elevated intracellular cAMP

1	AGC	TTG	CGA	ATC	GTA	AGA	AAC	AAT	TTC	ACC	CTG	CTG	ACA	AAC	CTT	CAC	GGA	GCA	CCG	AAC	AGG	TCG	CCA	GCG	GCT	AGT	CAG	GCT	CCA	GTC	ACC	AGA	GTC	AGC	CTG		
1	Ser	Leu	Arg	Ile	Val	Arg	Asn	Asn	Phe	Thr	Leu	Leu	Thr	Asn	Leu	His	Gly	Ala	Pro	Asn	Lys	Arg	Ser	Pro	Ala	Ala	Ser	Gln	Ala	Pro	Val	Thr	Arg	Val	Ser	Leu	
1	Met	Phe	Gln	His	Gln	Thr	Asn	Pro	Gly	Gly	Pro	Thr	Asn							Arg	Arg	Arg	Pro	Arg	Asp	Gln	Glu	Ile	His	Gln	Glu	Pro	Arg	Tyr	Pro	Lys	
109	CAA	GAA	GAA	TCA	TAT	CAG	AAA	CTA	GCA	ATG	GAG	ACG	CTG	GAG	GAA	CTA	GAC	TGG	TGC	CTA	GAC	CAG	CTA	GAG	ACC	ATC	CAG	ACC	TAC	CGC	TCT	GTC	AGC	GAG	ATG	GCT	
37	Gln	Glu	Glu	Ser	Tyr	Gln	Lys	Leu	Ala	Met	Glu	Thr	Leu	Glu	Leu	Asp	Trp	Cys	Leu	Asp	Gln	Leu	Glu	Thr	Ile	Gln	Thr	Tyr	Arg	Ser	Val	Ser	Glu	Met	Ala		
31	Ala	Arg	Gly	His	Thr	Pro	Ala	Trp	Pro	Pro	Thr	Gln	Ser	Arg	Ser	Trp	Thr	Gly	Ala	Ser	Thr	Ser	Trp	Arg	Pro	Ser	Arg	Pro	Ile	Ala	Ala	Ser	Pro	Thr	Trp	Arg	
217	TCA	AAC	AAG	TTC	AAA	AGG	ATG	CTG	AAC	CGG	GAG	CTG	ACA	CAC	CTC	TCA	GAG	ATG	AGC	AGA	TCA	GGG	AAC	CAA	CTG	TCT	GAA	TAC	ATT	CTG	AAC	ACG	TTC	TTA	GAC	AAG	
73	Ser	Asn	Lys	Phe	Lys	Arg	Met	Leu	Asn	Arg	Glu	Leu	Thr	His	Leu	Ser	Glu	Met	Ser	Arg	Ser	Gly	Asn	Gln	Val	Ser	Glu	Tyr	Ile	Ser	Asn	Thr	Phe	Leu	Asp	Lys	
67	Arg	Leu	Ser	Cys	Lys	Arg	Met	Leu	Asn	Lys	Glu	Leu	Ser	His	Phe	Ser	Glu	Ser	Ser	Arg	Ser	Gly	Asn	Gln	Ile	Ser	Glu	Tyr	Ile	Cys	Ser	Thr	Phe	Leu	Asp	Lys	
325	CAG	AAC	GAT	GTG	GAA	ATC	CCA	TCT												CCC	ACC	CAG	AAG	GAC	AGG	GAG	AAG	AAG	AAG	AAG	CAG	CAG					
109	Gln	Asn	Asp	Val	Glu	Ile	Pro	Ser												Pro	Thr	Gln	Lys	Asp	Arg	Glu	Lys	Lys	Lys	Lys	Gln	Gln					
103	Gln	Gln	Glu	Phe	Asp	Leu	Pro	Ser	Leu	Arg	Val	Glu	Asp	Asn	Pro	Glu	Leu	Val	Ala	Ala	Asn	Ala	Ala	Ala	Gly	Gln	Ser	Ala	Gly	Gln	Tyr	Ala	Arg	Ser	Arg		
388																				CTC	ATG	ACC	CAG	ATA	AGT	GGA	GTG	AAG									
130																				Leu	Met	Thr	Gln	Ile	Ser	Gly	Val	Lys									
145	Ser	Pro	Arg	Gly	Pro	Pro	Met	Ser	Gln	Ile	Ser	Gly	Val	Lys	Arg	Pro	Leu	Ser	His	Thr	Asn	Ser	Phe	Thr	Gly	Glu	Arg	Leu	Pro	Thr	Phe	Gly	Val	Glu	Thr	Pro	
478	AAT	GAG	GAT	CAT	CTA	GCC	AAG	GAG	CTG	GAA	GAC	CTG	AAC	AAA	TGG	GCC	CTT	AAC	ATC	TTC	AAC	CTG	GCT	GGG	TAC	TCC	CAT	AAT	CGG	CCC	CTC	ACA	TGC	ATC	ATG	TAC	
160	Asn	Glu	Asp	His	Leu	Ala	Lys	Glu	Leu	Glu	Asp	Leu	Asn	Lys	Trp	Gly	Leu	Asn	Ile	Phe	Asn	Val	Ala	Gly	Tyr	Ser	His	Asn	Arg	Pro	Leu	Thr	Cys	Ile	Met	Tyr	
181	Arg	Glu	Asn	Glu	Leu	Gly	Thr	Leu	Leu	Gly	Glu	Leu	Asp	Thr	Trp	Gly	Ile	Gln	Ile	Phe	Ser	Ile	Gly	Glu	Phe	Ser	Val	Asn	Arg	Pro	Leu	Thr	Cys	Val	Ala	Tyr	
586	GCC	ATT	TTC	CAG	GAA	AGA	GAC	CTT	CTA	AAG	ACG	TTT	AAA	ATC	TCC	TCC	GAC	ACC	TTT	GTA	ACC	TAC	ATG	ACT	TTA	GAA	GAC	CAT	TAC	CAT	TCT	GAT	GTG	CGC	TAT		
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217	Thr	Ile	Phe	Gln	Ser	Arg	Glu	Leu	Leu	Thr	Ser	Leu	Met	Ile	Pro	Pro	Lys	Thr	Phe	Leu	Asn	Phe	Met	Ser	Thr	Leu	Glu	Asp	His	Tyr	Val	Lys	Asp	Asn	Pro	Phe	
694	CAC	AAC	AGC	CTG	CAC	GCT	GCT	GAC	GTG	GCC	CAG	TCA	ACG	CAC	GTT	CTC	CTC	TCT	ACG	CCA	GCA	CTG	GAT	GCT	GTC	TTT	ACA	CAG	CTC	GAA	ATC	GCT	GCT	GCC	ATT	TTT	
232	His	Asn	Ser	Leu	His	Ala	Ala	Asp	Val	Ala	Gln	Ser	Thr	His	Val	Leu	Ser	Thr	Pro	Ala	Leu	Ala	Val	Phe	Thr	Asp	Leu	Glu	Ile	Leu	Ala	Ala	Ile	Phe			
253	His	Asn	Ser	Leu	His	Ala	Ala	Asp	Val	Thr	Gln	Ser	Thr	Asn	Val	Leu	Leu	Asn	Thr	Pro	Ala	Leu	Glu	Gly	Val	Phe	Thr	Pro	Leu	Glu	Val	Gly	Gly	Ala	Leu	Phe	
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325	His	His	Leu	Ala	Val	Ala	Phe	Lys	Leu	Leu	Gln	Asn	Gln	Gly	Cys	Asp	Ile	Phe	Cys	Asn	Met	Gln	Lys	Lys	Gln	Arg	Gln	Thr	Leu	Arg	Lys	Met	Val	Ile	Asp	Ile	
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505																																					
1531	GAA	GAA	GAG	GAT	TCT	GAA	GGA	CCG	GAA	ANG	GAG	GGA	GAA	GCC	CCC	AAC	TAT	TTC	AGC	AGC	ACA	AAG	ACA	CTT	TGT	GTG	ATC	GAT	CCA	GAG	AAC	AGG	GAT	TCT	CTG	GAA	
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547	Glu	Thr	Asp	Ile	Asp	Ile	Ala	Thr	Glu	Asp	Lys	Ser	Leu	Ile	Asp	Thr		Ser	Pro	Ser	Val	Trp	Arg		Thr	Phe	Tyr	Pro		Arg	Ala	Cys	Gln	Leu	Ser	Gly	
575	Ala	Pro	Arg	Thr	Gly	Gly	Cys	Gln	Asn	Gln	Pro	Gln	His	Gly	Gly	Met																					
1747	AGG	GCC	CAC	CTA	CCA	GAG	CCA	AGG	CCT	GCA	CAA	AAC	AAA	GCC	CAC	CTG	GCT	TTG	CAG	TTA	CTT	GAG	TTT	GGA	GCC	AGA	ATG	CAA	GCC	CGT	GAA	GCA	AAT	AGC	AGT	TCC	
583	Arg	Ala	His	Leu	Pro	Glu	Pro	Glu	Pro	Ala	Gln	Asn	Lys	Gly	His	Leu	Ala	Leu	Gln	Leu	Leu	Phe	Gly	Ala	Arg	Met	Gln	Gly	Arg	Glu	Ala	Asn	Ser</				

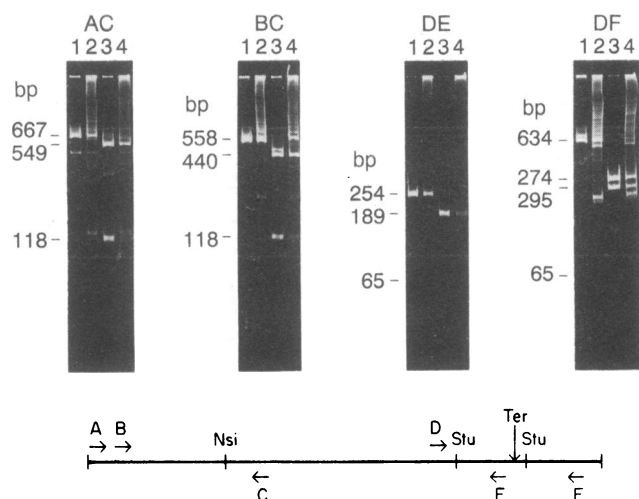


FIG. 3. Analysis of DPD cDNA structure using PCR. Reactions were carried out as described and the reaction products (either untreated or cleaved with a restriction endonuclease) were analyzed on a polyacrylamide gel stained with ethidium bromide. The diagram at the bottom of the figure illustrates the DPD cDNA and the positions of primer oligonucleotides (A, B, C, D, E, and F) used. The locations of the restriction sites for *Nsi* I and *Stu* I are also shown, as is the position of the termination codons (Ter). Each of the four panels is labeled to indicate the primers used for PCR. Lanes: 1, PCR product using the cloned DNA as template; 2, PCR product resulting from the single-stranded cDNA template made from total rat brain poly(A)⁺ RNA; 3 and 4, PCR products from the cloned DNA template or cDNA template, respectively, which have been cleaved with *Nsi* I (AC and BC) or *Stu* I (DE and DF). Restriction fragment lengths are indicated on the left. These lengths have been calculated from the known sequence and are in agreement with the observed mobility of standard DNA fragments run on the same gel.

(10DAB with pADNS) showed no cAMP phosphodiesterase activity. Results with the controls were unchanged when performed at 0°C or in the absence of Mg²⁺ and were comparable to results obtained when no extract was added. These results indicate that there is indeed no detectable background phosphodiesterase activity in this strain.

In contrast, considerable cAMP phosphodiesterase activity was seen in the 10DAB strain transformed with pADPD. The rate of cAMP hydrolysis in cells containing *DPD* was measured as a function of cAMP concentration (Fig. 5). The deduced *K_m* for cAMP is 3.5 μM and the calculated *V_{max}* is 1.1 nmol·mg⁻¹·min⁻¹.

The assay conditions were varied to ascertain the cation preferences of the enzyme and to determine the ability of calcium and calmodulin to stimulate its activity. In these assays, Mn²⁺ can be used as well as Mg²⁺, and either cation

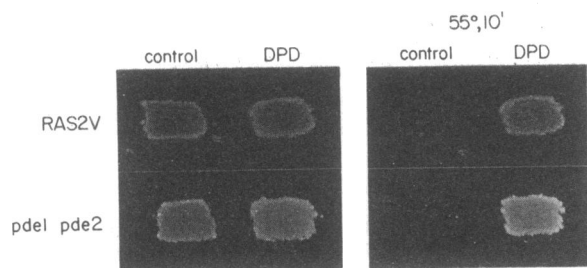


FIG. 4. Heat shock phenotype. Two heat shock-sensitive yeast strains, TK161-R2V (*RAS2^{val19}*) and 10DAB (*pde1⁻*, *pde2⁻*), were transformed with either the pADNS cloning vector alone (control), or with the pADPD plasmid expressing the rat brain phosphodiesterase (*DPD*). Yeast patches were grown on synthetic medium plates for 1 day and then replica plated to fresh plates at 30°C (Left) or to preheated plates and incubated at 55°C for 10 min before returning to 30°C (Right). Recovery time at 30°C was 36 hr.

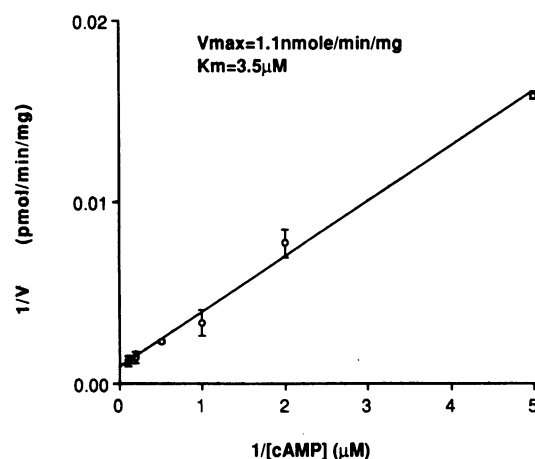


FIG. 5. DPD enzyme kinetics. Phosphodiesterase assays were performed on cell extracts as described with a final Mg²⁺ concentration of 10 mM. The cAMP concentration was varied from 0.2 to 10 μM. Two independent determinations were made and background measured in vector-only extracts was subtracted. Error bars are based on SD.

in 1 mM final concentration was sufficient. Calcium/calmodulin was unable to stimulate the measured phosphodiesterase activity in the extract (data not shown). A parallel assay in which beef heart phosphodiesterase (Boehringer Mannheim) was used yielded a 6.5-fold stimulation with the addition of calcium/calmodulin (data not shown). Finally, no cGMP phosphodiesterase activity was detected in our assays. Beef heart phosphodiesterase was again used as a positive control. In addition, cGMP present in amounts 100-fold over substrate concentrations was unable to inhibit cAMP phosphodiesterase activity.

DISCUSSION

Previous workers have cloned a mammalian gene in yeast by using a biological screen (33). In that case, a homolog to the *cdc2* gene of *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* was cloned by screening a cDNA library for complementation of *cdc2* mutants. In that library, the cDNAs were inserted proximal to the simian virus 40 early large tumor antigen promoter. In our work, we have used a library with mammalian cDNAs inserted into a yeast expression vector, proximal to a strong yeast promoter. In addition, we have used *Not* I linkers for cDNA cloning, which allows the convenient subcloning of an entire insert library from one vector to another. We feel that this will be a generally useful approach for cloning genes from higher eukaryotes when functional screens are possible in yeast. This system is particularly useful for the cloning of other cAMP phosphodiesterases from mammals. The availability of yeast strains totally lacking endogenous cAMP phosphodiesterase activity will also facilitate the biochemical characterization of these new phosphodiesterases.

The mammalian *DPD* cDNA can encode a protein with a high degree of amino acid sequence identity (80%) with the predicted *D. melanogaster dunce* gene product over an extended region. The *dunce* gene has been shown to encode a high-affinity cAMP phosphodiesterase required for normal learning and memory in flies (30–32). Compared to the striking level of sequence identity between *DPD* and *dunce*, the sequence conservation among other known cAMP phosphodiesterases is scant (34). Therefore, the *DPD*–*dunce* homology in the conserved region represents more than a constraint on sequences required for cAMP binding and hydrolysis and suggests a conservation of interactions with other components.

Biochemical characterization of the DPD cDNA product expressed in yeast indicates that it is a high-affinity cAMP-specific phosphodiesterase, as is *dunce* (31, 32). In addition, DPD activity, as measured in our assays, is not stimulated by the presence of calcium/calmodulin. This property is shared with *dunce* and is distinct from some other phosphodiesterases (for a review, see ref. 35). The two proteins, DPD and *dunce*, thus appear to have similar biochemical characteristics. However, it should also be noted that DPD encodes a protein product that shows much less significant homology (35%) to *dunce* beyond the previously described highly conserved region. These nonconserved sequences could result in an altered or refined function for this mammalian *dunce* homolog.

Since the predicted rat DPD product diverges from the *Drosophila dunce* gene product, and since we have merely a single cDNA isolate, we were concerned that the structure of our cDNA might not reflect the structure of the DPD mRNA. We have described here the use of PCRs to compare the structure of our DPD cDNA with the DPD mRNA. This study indicates a complete concordance in structure. Our method should also be applicable to the detection and analysis of alternate mRNA splicing (see below).

Our DPD sequence encodes a methionine codon at position 46 and the established reading frame remains open through to position 563, resulting in a protein with a predicted molecular mass of 60 kDa. The same reading frame, however, is open beyond the 5' end of the coding strand (Fig. 2). At present, we cannot say whether the methionine codon at position 46 is the initiating codon for the DPD protein. The coding sequence is interrupted by three closely spaced terminator codons. However, the established reading frame then remains open for an additional 116 codons, followed by more terminator codons, a polyadenylation consensus signal, and a poly(A) stretch. This 3' open reading frame could be incorporated into another *dunce*-like phosphodiesterase through alternate splicing. To examine this, we utilized the PCR method by using oligonucleotides from the conserved region and from the downstream open reading frame [(oligo(D) and -(F), respectively, in Fig. 3]. Our PCR method reveals no evidence of a DPD mRNA in adult rat brain that utilizes both the highly conserved domain and the open reading frame 3' to the stop codons. It should be noted, however, that a complex transcription pattern involving alternately spliced messages has been described for the *D. melanogaster dunce* locus (36, 37), and this may also be a feature of the mammalian homolog.

Davis *et al.* (38) have recently isolated a mammalian *dunce* homolog from a rat brain cDNA library by standard nucleic acid hybridization techniques. The gene they describe is indeed similar to, though distinct from, the DPD cDNA described here. Within the highly conserved region, as defined in this work, the predicted amino acid sequences of the two rat genes are 93% identical. This homology falls off dramatically, however, in the flanking regions, which show amino acid identities of 60% (upstream) and 30% (downstream) and require the use of sequence gaps for optimum alignment. These differences should be sufficient to distinguish the two related messages in *in situ* hybridizations and to permit the study of their distribution throughout the adult rat brain and during development.

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